# Publication of Valachi's Memoirs

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An embarrassed Justice Department disclosed yesterday that it no longer thinks publication of the Joseph Valachi memoirs of the Cosa Nostra will serve the public interest.

The Department filed a lawsuit in District Court here saying the memoirs would be downright "injurious" to the Government "in the exercise of its responsibilities for law enforcement."

Named as defendant in the suit was Peter Maas, the free-lance writer who had been chosen by the Department and Valachi to bring the story of organized crime to the American people.

**Samples Submitted**

The suit charges Maas breached an agreement by submitting a sample of the manuscript to a literary agent for submission to prospective publishers and informed the Department he would continue disseminating the excerpts despite Attorney General Katzenbach's decision March 16 to withdraw permission to publish. No reason was given for Katzenbach's reversal.

Maas, a New Yorker who agreed to be sued here, said he was "stunned" by the Government's action. He called a news conference for 10 a.m. today in the office of his lawyer, Gilbert Hahn Jr.

The suit seeks an order enjoining Maas from taking further steps to market the 1180-page manuscript typed by Government secretaries from a longhand document written by Valachi in a Washington jail cell. A court hearing for a 10-day restraining order was set for 2 p.m. today.

**Return of Copies Asked**

The suit also asks the court to order the return of two copies it turned over to Maas for editing with the understanding that no attempts would be made to publish the memoirs without Government approval.

Katzenbach had been widely criticized for giving special treatment to an avowed hoodlum by exempting him from a Bureau of Prisons regulation against writings by inmates about their criminal careers.

Special criticism came from Americans of Italian descent who complained that Katzenbach was helping to perpetuate an ethnic gangster image.

Valachi, who has been transferred to the Federal prison at Milan, Mich., was Exhibit A in the Department's 1963 quest for wiretapping and other legislation aimed at mobsters. But his Senate testimony produced no information that ever put anyone behind bars.